WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1.   A method for verifying that a postage metering system is located at a specific location, the method comprising the steps of:

generating a code at a data center, the code being associated with the postage metering system;

creating a challenge card having the code therein;

sending the challenge card via a carrier service to the specific location;

retrieving the code from the challenge card and entering the code into the postage metering system subsequent to receipt of the code at the specific location;

communicating the code retrieved from the challenge card from the postage metering system to the data center; and

comparing the code received at the data center from the postage metering system to the code generated at the data center to verify that the postage metering system is physically located at the specific location.

2.   A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the code generated at the data center is cryptographically secured.

3.   A method as recited in claim 2, wherein the code is cryptographically secured using secret key cryptography.

4.   A method as recited in claim 3, wherein upon the entering of the code retrieved from the challenge card into the postage metering system the postage metering system decrypts the code retrieved from the challenge card to verify its authenticity.

5.   A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the challenge card is a printed card.

6.   A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the challenge card is one of a

smart card, a floppy diskette, and a CD-ROM.

7.   A method as recited in claim 6, wherein the code is electronically retrieved from the challenge card and electronically entered into the postage metering system.

8.   A metering system comprising:
    means for accounting for value dispensed by the metering system;
    a challenge card having a code therein associated with an identification of the accounting means, the challenge card received from a carrier service;
    means for entering the code obtained from the challenge card into the accounting means; and
    means for communicating the entered code from the accounting means to a remote data for use in verifying the location of the accounting means.

9.   A method for verifying that a value dispensing system is located at a specific location, the method comprising the steps of:
    generating a code at a data center, the code being associated with the value dispensing system;
    creating a challenge card having the code therein;
    sending the challenge card via a carrier service to the specific location;
    retrieving the code from the challenge card and entering the code into the value dispensing system subsequent to receipt of the code at the specific location;
    communicating the code retrieved from the challenge card from the value dispensing system to the data center; and
    comparing the code received at the data center from the value dispensing system to the code generated at the data center to verify that the value dispensing system is physically located at the specific location.